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Coverups Are Difficult In Democratic Nation

In a way the revelation of the role of the Kaplan Fund of New York as a cover for operations of the central intelligence agency was unfortunate.

It was embarrassing to the CIA. Moreover, it may make ~~other~~ nations wary of accepting gifts from foundations in the United States for fear there may be some cloak and dagger activities attached to them.

On the other hand, the disclosure was evidence that a Democracy works in the open and that coverups and deceptions are difficult to maintain for any length of time. This should be an endorsement for Democracy and rather than casting suspicion on US activities should serve to increase the confidence of other nations that things are what they seem to be.

The Kaplan Fund, named for J. M. Kaplan, a prominent New York financier, is a legitimate foundation whose purpose is to strengthen Democracy at home and abroad through a general program of assistance to benevolent, charitable, educational, scientific and literary activities. Among its most noteworthy contributions has been heading the campaign for the preservation of Carnegie Hall.

The fund came under routine scrutiny in an investigation of tax exempt foundations by a congressional subcommittee headed by Congressman Wright Patman of Texas, which is delving into many forms of tax trickery.

In the course of the probe the connection of the Kaplan Fund as a cover for the CIA came to light. No effort was made to conceal the facts.

On the face of things there was nothing sinister about the foundation's activities. It simply was acting where it was not wise or fitting that the CIA should be the front organization.

Probably every country in the world carries on activities including espionage under some non official cover. The only difference is that in a totalitarian state and perhaps others the facts are not revealed.

The right to snoop and to expose is inherent in a Democracy. No one would be so naive as to imply the people thereby know everything that goes on. But at least a Democracy more than any other form of government provides the means of achieving the goal that if the people do not know about it, it did not happen.